



Civic Loop

Promoting Recycling through Community Leadership



Issue 1, Volume 5
Fall 2011



Safe Disposal of Medicines

Holiday Recycling Slide Collection Schedule

Thanksgiving Day
Thursday, November 24, 2011

If your collection date is:	Your collection day this week is:
Monday, November 21, 2011	No Change
Tuesday, November 22, 2011	No Change
Wednesday, November 23, 2011	No Change
Thursday, November 24, 2011	Friday, November 25, 2011
Friday, November 25, 2011	Saturday, November 26, 2011

Make sure your recycling containers are placed at the curb by 7 a.m. on your recycling collection day.

Please Note: There are no changes to Montgomery County's recycling collection schedule for Columbus Day (Monday, October 10, 2011); Veteran's Day (Friday, November 11, 2011); Christmas Day (Sunday, December 25, 2011); or New Year's Day (Sunday, January 1, 2012). For more information on the holiday collection slide schedule, visit montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling.

Recycle more now.

Do you, your family, or your neighbors have a medicine cabinet full of expired or unused medications? Have you ever thought about getting rid of these items but weren't sure what to do with them?



Medicines help treat certain health conditions and improve the quality of life for many. When taken properly and according to directions, medications can be very beneficial. However, if unused or expired medications are improperly disposed of by flushing them down the drain, the result can be potentially harmful to humans, wildlife and pets. These medications can enter local waterways and impact the growth and reproduction of aquatic life. To protect the health and safety of humans and the environment, the Division of Solid Waste Services would like to remind residents about the proper disposal of expired or unused medications.

Please share the information listed on page 3 of this issue of the Civic Loop newsletter with others in your community. Please forward copies of this newsletter to your community listservs or post links to the information contained in the newsletter or from the Division's website on your website. If you have additional questions or would like more information about the proper disposal of medications, please visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling. Thank you in advance for sharing this information with others in your community.

Ala Finkels
Recycling Coordinator

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling

Turn Fall Leaves into Nutrient-Rich Compost

This fall, try composting yard trim materials such as leaves, grass clippings and other garden trimmings. You'll save time, energy and the environment. The Division of Solid Waste Services provides residents with compost bins at no additional charge. Visit our website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling or call 311 for a list of locations where residents can obtain these compost bins. Locations exist across the County are many offer evening and weekend hours. Here are just a few simple composting tips to remember:



Place a mixture of leaves and grass clippings into your compost bin. If you add only leaves, it will take a longer time to make compost. A three-to-one mix of carbon to nitrogen materials (see list) works the best. Adding only grass clippings may result in a strong odor when the grass decomposes, so make sure to add some carbon-rich materials such as leaves when you add grass clippings.



Keep your compost pile moist throughout the year, especially when first adding materials. The compost pile should not be completely soaked, but should feel more like a damp sponge. A dry pile will not compost, so leave a concave depression at the top of the pile to capture rainwater. If the pile gets too wet, add some brown materials such as leaves.



Turn your pile occasionally to aerate it, whether every week, every month, or just once or twice a year. Doing so will add oxygen to your pile and will help speed the composting process.

✓ COMPOSTING DOS	⊘ COMPOSTING DON'Ts
Carbon-Rich (Brown) Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Dry leaves✓ Cotton rags✓ Dryer and vacuum lint✓ Sawdust✓ Straw✓ Wood chips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⊘ Black walnut tree leaves or twigs⊘ Coal or charcoal ash⊘ Diseased or insect-ridden plants⊘ Food wastes* (dairy products, fats, grease, lard, oils, meats, fish, bones and vegetable scraps)⊘ Pet wastes
Nitrogen-Rich (Green) Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Plant trimmings✓ Flowers✓ Grass clippings✓ Fresh hay✓ Nut shells	<p>*Please note: Adding food scraps to a compost bin is strongly discouraged as it can attract pests such as insects and rodents.</p>

Celebrate America Recycles Day 2011...Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Buy Recycled!

Did you know that it takes just nineteen 20-ounce plastic PET bottles (or one pound of plastic bottles) to make an extra large T-shirt? Recycling takes materials that may have been otherwise thrown away and instead turns them into a valuable commodity that can be used to make a new material.

November 15 is America Recycles Day, a nationally recognized day promoting recycling programs across the country. The Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services (DSWS) will be hosting numerous events around November 15 to promote recycling, waste reduction and buying products made with recycled materials.

For more information about America Recycles Day 2011 and upcoming community events sponsored by DSWS, please visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling.

Show Your Support and Take the ARD Pledge...

Take the America Recycles Day pledge to increase recycling awareness and be entered into a local drawing with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Residents are asked to pledge to increase their efforts to learn more about recycling in their community. There is no cost to participate and by entering your pledge on-line, you will be entered into a regional drawing for a chance to win a \$300 gift certificate to a local bicycle shop (all ages) or for students in grades K-12, a chance to win a \$300 gift certificate at a bicycle shop AND a \$500 grant to the local K-12 environmental program/club of choice. Take the pledge today.

www.americarecyclesday.org/pledge

Take the  Pledge



Expired or Unused Medications? The Right Prescription for Proper Disposal

The Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services (DSWS) receives questions from residents about the proper ways to dispose of expired or unused medications they have around their homes. Serious health problems can arise when medications are not properly taken and if they are inappropriately used by children or teenagers or accidentally ingested by family pets. Also, flushing some medications down the drain can have negative impacts on our local waterways, impacting the health of wildlife.

In Montgomery County, most medications can be safely disposed of in the trash. Be sure to follow these tips:

- Place unwanted or expired medication into a sealable plastic bag or other empty container to prevent liquid medications from leaking out.
- Mix with kitty litter, coffee grounds or sawdust (liquid medications can be solidified using kitty litter or sawdust).
- Seal the bag and/or container and crush pills or tablets.
- Put the bag and/or container containing the medication into your regular household trash.
- Remove the label with the patient's name from the original medicine vial or bottle.
- Place the empty plastic vial or bottle into your blue recycling bin. Empty aerosol inhalers can be recycled in our blue recycling bin, too.



As an alternative to disposing medications in the trash yourself, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) is currently sponsoring National Prescription Drug Take-Back collection events every six months. On October 12, 2010, President Obama signed the Safe and Secure Drug Disposal Act of 2010 to amend the Controlled Substances Act to permit the DEA to allow residents to safely dispose of their unwanted or expired medications by encouraging them to participate in special take-back events or other programs. To-date, the DEA has coordinated three (3) special take-back days. During the last collection day held on April 30, 2011, the DEA collected 188 tons or 376,593 pounds of unwanted or expired medications from over 5,300 take back locations in all 50 states.

The DEA is sponsoring the next National Prescription Drug Take-Back event on Saturday, October 29, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at various sites throughout the region. A listing of local sites will be available sometime in mid-September. To find a location site nearest you, visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling and click on "Dispose of drugs and medicines correctly".

Note: The FDA recommends that a very small list of extremely powerful narcotic pain relievers and other controlled substances should be disposed by flushing them down the toilet if these drugs cannot be disposed of through a drug take-back program. The Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services accepts medications disposed of as trash as described above and encourages residents to utilize the periodic drug take-back programs sponsored by the DEA. Information about such events will be posted on the Division's website as it becomes available.

Resources for More Information

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/default.htm

U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration

www.dea diversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, American Pharmacists Association, and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America Partnership

www.smarxtdisposal.net

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling



Fall 2011

Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services

Contact: Alan Pultyniewicz
101 Monroe Street, 6th Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Important Contact Information

Division of Solid Waste Services
101 Monroe Street, 6th Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850
Website: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling
Customer Service: 3-1-1
(240) 777-0311 (outside Montgomery County)
(240) 773-3556 (TTY)
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/311

County Transfer Station
(240) 777-6560

County Recycling Center
(301) 417-1433

This information is available in an alternate format by
calling Alan Pultyniewicz at (240) 777-6480.



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Calendar of Upcoming Events

Visit with staff and recycling volunteers from the Division of Solid Waste Services to learn more about waste reduction, reuse, recycling, buying recycled and more at the following events this fall:

Burtonsville Day

- Saturday, September 24, 2011 (10:00am - 3:00pm)
Marilyn J. Praisner Community Center
14906 Old Columbia Pike, Burtonsville

Izaak Walton League Hunting and Fishing Day

- Saturday, September 24, 2011 (11:00am - 4:00pm)
IWLA-Rockville Chapter; 18301 Waring Station
Road, Germantown

Germantown Oktoberfest

- Saturday, October 1, 2011 (11:00am - 8:00pm)
Ridge Road Park; 21155 Frederick Road,
Gaithersburg

1st District Police Station Open House

- Saturday, October 8, 2011 (12:00pm - 3:00pm)
1st District Police Station; 1451 Seven Locks Road,
Rockville

Montgomery County Community Home and Remodeling Expo

- Saturday, October 8, 2011 (10:00am - 6:00pm) and
Sunday, October 9, 2011 (11:00am - 5:00pm)
The Universities at Shady Grove Conference Center;
9630 Gudelsky Drive, Rockville

DSWS Electronics Recycling Collection Event

- Sunday, November 6, 2011 (12:00pm - 4:00pm)
Walt Whitman HS; 7100 Whittier Boulevard,
Bethesda

Visit our website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling for a full
listing of events.